GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4572
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GROWTH IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps the Government is taking for higher growth rate in Agriculture sector;

(b) the quantum of investments required to achieve the desired growth rate;

(c) the details of special schemes launched for growth of agriculture in the country particularly in North Bengal; and

(d) the steps taken to achieve the target and increase employment in the sector particularly in North Bengal?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHUR1A):

(a) With a view to increasing agricultural production, the Government have identified thrust areas for focused and priority attention, which include agricultural credit, irrigation, horticulture, crop diversification and marketing reforms. The Union Budget for 2005-06 has underscroed the importance of efforts aimed at turning the focus of commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks towards providing credit, especially production credit, to farm households. The other areas highlighted in the Budget include micro irrigation technology comprising drip and sprinkler irrigation, National Horticulture Mission with focus on backward and forward linkages, and development/strengthening of agricultural marketing infrastructure, grading and standardization.

(b) The growth rate of Gross Domestic Product in Agriculture Sector, including allied sectors, was set at 4% during the Tenth Five Year Plan and an investment requirement of Rs. 219.6 thousand crore (at 2001-02 prices) was projected to achieve this growth target.

(c) and (d) The special new Schemes launched for boosting growth of agriculture sector includeâ€”

(i) Development of Market Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization

(ii) Gramin Bhandaran Yojana

(iii) Small Farmers Agri Business Consortium

(iv) National Horticulture Mission,

(vi) Micro Irrigation including drip and sprinkler irrigation technology, National Fund for Strategic Agricultural Research for reviving and encouraging crop diversification, etc.

In regard to North Bengal, a special programme has been undertaken with the financial assistance of Netherlands Govt in Tarai region comprising the districts of Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar and Siliguri sub-divisions of Darjeeling. Besides, there is a body known as Uttarbanga Unnayana Parishad constituted under the chairmanship of Chief Minister of West Bengal to formulate and implement schemes for comprehensive development of Bengal Districts.